

**MARCH 31, 2005**

## **SCHAKOWSKY JOINS IN CALLING FOR SENSIBLE NATIONAL ENERGY POLICIES**

### **ILLINOIS PIRG REPORT FINDS: INVESTING IN ALTERNATIVE ENERGY MEANS MORE JOBS AND LOWER BILLS FOR CONSUMERS**

**CHICAGO, IL - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky, a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, today joined the call for sensible energy policies that would protect the environment, reduce costs for the consumers and promote economic growth. Schakowsky, whose committee will begin debating energy legislation next week in Washington, said, "Tomorrow is April Fool's Day and nothing could be more foolish than the Republican energy proposal. The Republican energy platform is a serious danger to our environment and to our health and it offers more of the same failed policies of dig, burn and pollute."**

Schakowsky spoke during a news conference organized by Illinois PIRG to unveil [their report: Redirecting Illinois' Energy: The Economic and Consumer Benefits of Clean Energy Policies](#)

. The report found that by implementing sensible energy policies, the economy and consumers in Illinois would "greatly benefit" and air pollution from power plants would be reduced.

Specifically, by requiring that the United States "generate 20 percent of its electricity from clean energy by the year 2020," and by shifting Illinois' \$1.9 billion federal share under last year's energy proposal that would have been used "to subsidize fossil fuels and nuclear power" and instead using those funds to invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency, Illinois would:

- Create 7,566 net jobs in 2020 and a net annual average of 4,637 jobs between 2005 and 2020;
- Increase wages by \$162 million in 2020;
- Increase Illinois's gross state product (GSP) by an annual average of \$75 million between 2005 and 2020;
- Save all consumers-residential, commercial, and industrial-\$794 million on natural gas bills in 2020;
- Save consumers \$865 million on electricity bills in 2020;
- Reduce global warming carbon dioxide emissions from power plants by 32 percent

of 2002 levels; smogforming nitrogen oxide emissions by six percent of 2002 levels; and soot-forming sulfur dioxide emissions by seven percent of 2002 levels, all by 2020.

In 2004, the Senate twice rejected H.R. 6, the 2004 energy bill conference report. That legislation would have given more than \$35 billion in taxpayer dollars to the coal, nuclear, oil and gas industries and permitted oil drilling and energy development in the National Arctic Wildlife Refuge, while failing to guard the environment against corporate polluters, to promote renewable fuels and efficiency, or to protect consumers from high prices caused by market manipulation.

"I am hopeful that my colleagues in Congress will realize that investing in sensible and alternative energy solutions for the 21st Century instead of giving away more taxpayer dollars to Big Oil and nuclear energy giants is safe and sound public policy. If Republicans are really serious about addressing our nation's energy needs, then they should start by picking up a copy of PIRG's report and kicking the energy lobbyists out of the Committee room," Schakowsky concluded.

**STATEMENT OF U.S. REPRESENTATIVE  
JAN SCHAKOWSKY (D-IL)  
MEMBER OF ENERGY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE  
MARCH 31, 2005**

I wish to thank Illinois PIRG for their continued effort and hard work on behalf of consumers and for their non-stop campaign for sensible energy policies that protect the environment and safeguard our health and pocketbooks.

I am also proud to stand here with Lt. Governor Pat Quinn and am looking forward to working with him and Governor Blagojevich to make Illinois a national model for environmental protection and energy efficiency.

Tomorrow is April Fool's Day and nothing could be more foolish than the Republican energy proposal. The Republican energy platform is a serious danger to our environment and to our health and it offers more of the same failed policies of dig, burn and pollute.

That is why Illinois PIRG's [report](#) could not have come at a better time. The Energy and Commerce Committee, of which I am a member, is about to begin debate on an energy bill.

This report should serve as a guide to what we can do in Congress to bring about real

and meaningful energy legislation that would create jobs, protect the environment and reduce monthly electric and gas bills for consumers.

What we witnessed last Congress was an energy bill, written by the energy industry lobbyists, that would have given more than \$35 billion in taxpayer dollars to the coal, nuclear, oil and gas industries and would have permitted oil drilling and energy development in the National Arctic Wildlife Refuge. That same legislation failed to guard the environment against corporate polluters; it failed to promote renewable fuels and efficiency, and it failed to protect consumers from high prices caused by market manipulation.

Thankfully, that same energy bill failed to pass the Senate and President Bush never had a chance to sign it.

This year, we must do better and we will. I am hopeful that my colleagues in Congress will realize that investing in sensible and alternative energy solutions for the 21st Century instead of giving away more taxpayer dollars to Big Oil and nuclear energy giants is safe and sound public policy.

Today, Illinois relies on 99% of its electricity from fossil fuels and nuclear energy and less than one percent from renewable energy. That can change. That is why I support a national energy standard and join Illinois PIRG in calling on the U.S. to generate 20 percent of its electricity from clean energy by the year 2020. This is standard that would result in cleaner air, less pollution from power plants, a safer environment and lead to more jobs and greater economic growth for Illinois and our country.

And by investing taxpayer dollars in renewable energies and energy efficiency, instead of spending billions of dollars to subsidize energy companies, we will be making a real difference in our nation's long term energy needs.

If Republicans are really serious about addressing our nation's energy needs, then they should start by picking up a copy of PIRG's report and kicking the energy lobbyists out of the Committee room.